

An
Inaugural Dissertation
on
"Psoriasis, dry or scaly Itch."

Submitted to the Examination of John Anderson D.D. President,
The Trustees and Medical Professors, of the University
of Pennsylvania.

For the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

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2 Introduction

My principal intention in writing this Essay, was to call the attention of Physicians to a remedy which has not I believe, been recommended in any author for the cure of Psoriasis: not to advance any thing original, as respects the causes and symptoms of this cutaneous disease; the description of which I have taken the liberty of transcribing from Dr Williams book on cutaneous diseases, which contains a more accurate detail of the symptoms than I could have written, had the time I devoted to writing this Essay been more considerable. Presuming that I have satisfied the Professors that my object was not to have concealed the authors name, from whose book I took most of the symptoms of Psoriasis; I now make some observations on the subject of this dissertation.

my humble
servant

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Psoriasis is characterized by a rough, and scaly state
of the cuticle, sometimes continuous, sometimes in separate
patches of various sizes, but of an irregular figure, and
for the most part accompanied with Itch and orifice
across the skin, sometimes as an eruption of papulae
in various figures, attended with roughness, itching,
Chaps, &c. Before I proceed to a particular account
of this disease, it is proper to remark that the same
has been described by some medical writers under
the denomination of Psora or Scabies sicca, by others
under that of impetigo. —
This disease has been described as appearing under many
forms; as Psoriasis diffusa, Psoriasis palmaria, Psori-
asis intractata, which last was termed by the an-
cients Psora Agria; Rough, and inveterate Psora;
Psoriasis gyrata, Psoriasis guttata, Psoriasis labialis,
and Psoriasis infantilis: but not having observed any
other forms of this disease but the two first, I shall
confine my observations principally to them, leaving
at the same time that the Remedy I shall advocate
and most confidently recommend is applicable
and may be beneficially applied to every form of
this complaint. —

The persons most subject to these various forms of
disease, are those of the cutaneous predisposition and
those that have a full long and pulse, particularly
weak and irritable women who are in general
more predisposed to this disease than men.

It

It also frequently occurs in young females labouring under chlorosis, and proves in that case very obstinate. The opinion given by Mercatorius, Sennertus, and others, that the Dry, or Scaly Peltis may be communicated by contagion, has been properly corrected by Dr. Willis. I have known women affected with this disease for years without ever hearing of its being communicated to their husbands. There is perhaps more reason in the observations made by Hoffmann, that a disposition to this disease may be transmitted hereditarily; as I have observed it in more than one family, in those I do not think could have been communicated by contact, or they having lived on the same kind of Aliment. The cause in some of them it did not appear until they were married and had been separated for years from their parents.

Causes— The causes of this disease are involved in much obscurity. Some have supposed the causes to be, the constant use of dried and salted meats, or crustaceous fishes, along with the too liberal use of acid wines, bad Matt liquors, &c. But I believe the Proximus often originates from occasional causes, which are much stronger, and have a more immediate operation. Food difficult of digestion, eating too great a quantity of acid fruits, the unseasonable use of the Cold bath,

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bath. Large draughts of cold water taken when the
body has been heated by exercise, and some improper
condiments, as Mith and fish, are the circumstances
to which patients refer the complaint when it
appears in a sudden eruption on the skin: and
such causes will I apprehend, be deemed sufficient
to excite the disease in those who are predisposed to it
constitutionally. The external application of cold,
to the body when heated, has been mentioned as a cause
of the complaint as well as the internal use of cold
drinks, &c. - It matters not in what manner the
body be heated, whether by heat of fires, rooms, or
exercise, as cold produces the same effects in all
such cases. Hence such persons are especially liable
to it whose ways of life subject them to such vic-
issitudes, as smiths and other trades, that oblige
those who work at them to be near fires, or in heated
rooms; and such as use violent exercise or labour,
huntmen, porters, and such like, who are too
apt to indulge their appetites without caution.
Women who are exposed to the same sudden
changes of temperature, are liable to the same
disease, as cooks, &c. It is proper to observe that the
disease is much less in those who take cold liquors
at the time they are heated with exercise or labour,
they continue to pursue their labour sometime
after drinking, than if they leave off their work
immediately. The season of the year or temperature
of the air materially contributes towards the pro-
duction of this disease.

It generally occurs, according to my observations, in the spring season, when the changes of the atmosphere are most frequent and severe. But on this point medical authors speak with some diversity of sentiment. Hippocrates enumerates Psora among the the spring diseases, but Avicenna places them among the autumnal diseases.

Symptoms. I shall only describe the symptoms of the Psoriasis diffusa, and Psoriasis palmata, not having as I before observed seen any other forms of this disease. The Psoriasis diffusa spreads into large patches irregularly circumscribed, reddish, rough, and chafy, with scales interspersed. It commences, in general, with numerous minute asperities, or elevations of the cuticle more perceptible by the touch, than by sight. In the course of two or three weeks all the intervening cuticle becomes rough, and chafy, appears red, and raised, and wrinkled. The lines of the skin sinking into deep furrows. The scales which form upon them are slightly of ten slight and repeatedly exfoliate. Sometimes without any previous eruption of papulae, a large portion of the skin becomes dry, harsh, reddish, and scaly as before described. In other cases the disorder commences with separate patches of an uncertain form and size, some of

them being small and some much larger. The patches gradually expand till they become confluent, and nearly cover the limb or part affected. The *Pruriginosa diffusa* is attended with a sensation of heat, and with a very troublesome itching, especially at Night. The Chaps or fissures in the skin, which usually make a part of this complaint, are very sore and painful, but seldom discharge any fluid. Should any part of the diseased surface be forcibly excoriated, there issues out a thin lymph mixed with some drops of blood, which slightly stings, and stiffens the skin, but soon concretes into a thin dry scab. This is again succeeded by a white scaling gradually increasing, and spreading in various directions. As the roughness, chaps, &c. disappear, a new cuticle is formed, at first red, dry, rough, and shrivelled, but which, in two or three weeks, recovers the proper texture. Symptoms of general disorder attend the first appearance of the *Pruriginosa diffusa*, as headach, inappetence, pain or sharpness of the stomach, pains, cramps and coldness of the extremities, with a sense of universal languor and debility. During the progress of the eruption, these symptoms abate, or wholly disappear, but they for the most part, precede any return of

of the complaint, which usually take place
winter or early in the spring. The duration of
the Psoriasis is from one to four months. If, in
some constitutions, it does not then disappear, but
becomes to a certain degree permanent, there is at
least an aggravation, or extension of it, about the
usual period of its return. In other cases, the disease
at the annual returns, differs much as to its extent,
and also with respect to the violence of the prur-
=ding symptoms.

The Psoriasis palmaria is a very obstinate local
= disease of the hand and is nearly confined to the palms and
the hand. It commences with a small, harsh, white, or
scaly patch, which gradually spreads over the whole
palm, and sometimes appears in a slight degree
on the inside of the fingers, and wrist. The
= face feels rough from the detached and
edges of the scaly laminae. The cuticular
are deep, and cleft at the bottom longitudinally
in various places, so as to bleed on stretching the
fingers. A sensation of heat, pain, and stiffness
the motions of the hands attend this complaint.
is worst in winter or spring, and occasionally
disappears in autumn or summer, leaving
soft dark red cuticle: but many persons are
troubled with it for a series of years, expe-
=riencing only slight remissions. Every return
aggravation of it is preceded by an increase
of heat and pain.

of heat, and dryness with intolerable itching. -
The snakes have the *Bouasus pratensis* locally,
from the irritation of the wax they constantly em-
ploy. In Brazil, Tenmen, Silver Smiths, &c. the
complaint seems to be produced by their handling
cold metal. A long predisposition to it may give
affat to different occasional causes.

URE - The Remedies used in these two forms
of this disease may be divided into internal and
external; the first are only requisite in those
cases that are attended with a general disease
of the system, as with syphilis which not
over the skin frequently occurs. 2dly In those attended with
inflammatory action of the arterial system
accompanied with much local inflammation;
and 3dly In those occurring in debilitated persons
attended with a flaccidity of the system in general.
When there is reason to believe from the existing
symptoms, or from the history of the case, that the
person is affected with syphilis; which a brown cop-
per coloured surface indicates; a mercurial course
is absolutely necessary, and if it has been of long
continuance, other auxiliaries should be used with
the mercurials, as Mezeson or the Lisbon diet drink;
together with these the local application to be here-
after mentioned should be used.

When with the local affection, there appears to be
from the activity of the piles much arterial excitement;

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or from pain and inflammation in the affected parts, the system in general is called into sympathy, depleting remedies are indicated, and for this purpose purging with Calomel and Salap. or Senna & Rhubarb will be one of the best modes of depleting the system; with which we should use gentle diaphoretics, or Antimonials; particularly if there appear to be much stertor on the surface, or a suppression of perspiration. Should the inflammatory symptoms be violent, which may be known by the actings of the pulse, pain, tenderness, and tumefaction of the affected parts, especially if the person be of the sanguineous predisposition; bleeding will be absolutely necessary, which may be done and repeated if requisite during the use of the cathartics and diaphoretics. When using these remedies abstain from diet, and detesting drinks should be used with a strict adherence to cleanliness.

In the third case or those accompanied with a general debilitated state of the moving fibres or system generally; Tonics should be given to restore the proper tone or power of the system: and for this purpose the vegetable, or mineral Tonics, as the nature of the case may require should be used; allowing the patient generous diet and drink. Tho' in some cases where there did not appear to be a general disordered action, I have seen Calomel used as an alterative in doses of three or four grains every

any other right with considerable benefits -
cases of obdurate tons continued. Father Dr. Neesh of
arrived in his Scotch we should approach them
with a trembling hand, as he conceived the stimulus
the pain and irritation was a support to animal
life; in such cases we should introduce those
have we attempted the cure which I think would
be far more convenient to the person
having under this cutaneous affection than the
as they might be introduced into the
a convenient part of the body with the equally
safe.

we have been many external remedies recommended
and used in this cutaneous disease, some of
the following ~~have~~ I have seen used with very good
effect in the most difficult cases and we are told most of them -
performed cures. These are 1st Iodine and
Mercury in Sal. Gales in Sal. Iodine
often cured this disease when not very obstinate.
2^d Iodine of Mercur. 3^d Solutions of Iodine
in Sal. Gales of Colapex, which I have been informed has
cured this disease 4th Strong acids Vinagre applied
every day I have seen cure it after some
times. 5th Compounds had been used without effect
6th Tormentum has been often used and the
7th frequently with much benefit, particularly when
applied with a small quantity of Sal. Iodine; All

These and many other applications have been used, but I have known most of them used with-
out relief in several cases, all of which yielded at-
wards to a more efficacious and less painful
Remedy; which I can recommend with much
confidence, having never seen it used with-
out being attended with more or less ^{benefit} and that
in a very short time. This is the extract of Cataplasma
which I believe to be a Remedy that may be applied
in various forms of Bores with considerable benefit. I
have seen the Bores diffused several cases
I have seen completely cured by its application to
the affected parts three or four times a day; or as often as
the itching and burning in the diseased parts
it, which distressing symptoms it removes in a
short time after its application. I generally use it
in the following manner; the extract is to be made
into a very fine powder and well mixed with
much Sweet cream or Olive oil (the former preferred)
as will make it into an ointment of common consistence
as soon as it is mixed it should be spread on linen
cloth and applied; never mixing more at one
time is sufficient to drop the diseased parts.
If it does not cure the complaint as soon as
expected, it should be persisted in for more
and continued as long as any appearance of
is to be seen. I once knew it used for Sea
before the patient was cured, tho' she had used

...been in the hands of the same disorder in point it was resorted to, which
...me to think it was more obstinate than
...deasy cases.

It is difficult to explain satisfactorily its mode of
operation in curing this disease. May it not be
...its asthenic and blent with the usually
...languous matter? I am inclined to think its
...depends much on these two principles,
...observing their good effects when united in
...proportions, applied to many ulcerated surfaces
...other causes.

To illustrate the good effects of the extract of
...in curing this disease, I will take the
...of stating two very refractory cases that yield
...external use after most of the commonly used
...had been used. Such as the case mentioned had been
...the much case and persisted in for several years,
...them as derided by their Physicians, with
...experiencing any relief.

The first case was Mrs. M. — aged thirty years, who
...with the Psoas diffuser, the pain describ
...extending over the cutaneous surface of her
...arms, neck, face, and back, they being com
...by the disease; attended with the same
...caused her to scratch
...the disease when, from which
...be a description of the
...relieve

coloured Linnæ. In ¹⁴his situation she had been for
a considerable time making use of the before mentioned
common Remedies, before she applied to my pre-
-tor, who gave her three or four ounces of the powder
extract, dissolving her's in the morning.
She soon observed it should be used. In less than
a week again applied for some of the same powder, ob-
serving that it removed the burning and itching
like a charm and that she believed it would cure
her, the disease being considerably removed. He
then gave her a quantity, as he thought sufficient
cure her, and it did to all appearance remove the
disease; when she neglected the application of this
remedy: in six or seven weeks the disease by some
its appearance, she had become once more to this
most useful of all applications yet known; and
it completely eradicated this very obstinate cutane-
ous disease. It is now more than five years and she
continues well in every respect. When she first
applied to my pre-^{tor}, the hosts applied
considerably to remove which she took during
the first week two or three, active purges of Calomel
and Salaf, and afterwards small doses of
of Antimony, so as to produce a gentle diarrhoea.
It may be thought by some that these internal
means cured the disease: to this I only mention she
to reply, that she had been ^{then} frequently before she

he made use of the extract, without experiencing
 them any relief; consequently the rational app-
 lication must have been the principal agent
 curing the disease.

In the second case was M^{rs} S. — who had laboured under
 the disease for the greater part of four years, be-
 fore she made use of this extract, observing which time she
 underwent the care and devotion of a eminent a-
 nced. The disease was in Maryland; where she made use of several
 different rational and Internal remedy that is generally used the
 common way in cases till he has tired of curing this often for
 untowardly probable diseases. Some months afterwards her hus-
 band received of several cures made by the application
 of this extract. His preceptor to visit his wife, who after
 some time examined the affected parts, which were in
 a state of inflammation, and being informed by her rational remedies
 as used, she had used without effect, proposed the use of
 the extract; which was applied with the effect of
 mitigating the disease, but he (my preceptor) consid-
 ering that the cure might be expedited by the appli-
 cation of a solution of the mixture of Mercury, directed
 her to visit the affected parts with it and not use the
 powder until he should see her again; in which
 direction she strenuously obeyed her Tutor or preceptor
 for days, when she was convinced to lay the solution by
 consequence of the inflammation and pain pro-
 duced by its application, observing these painfull
 and

and distressing efforts, he once more resorted to the
of the extract which was continued for a considerable
The not without performing a complete cure to the
great satisfaction of the lady and her husband.
When using the extract she took occasionally
a dose of Calomel for the first two weeks; but
I cannot think had any effect in removing the
case, because there was at that time very little
sensible alteration, and during the use
the extract after the solution of the mercurial
Mercury had been applied, she did not use
internal medicine: from which I think it may
be presumed that the cure was produced
by the application of the extract -

What I have said respecting the treatment
of Psoriasis diffusa, is applicable to the management
of the Psoriasis palmata; with this exception
it does not require the exhibition of internal medicine
as frequently as the former, being more
a local affection which seldom or never I have
observed, required any other medicine than
the extract used as directed in the management
of the Psoriasis diffusa. If there should appear
to be any constitutional derangement it will
necessitate the use of the internal remedies

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during the management of the Psoriasis diffusa
varying them as the state of the system may require.
As I have never seen any other forms of Psoriasis,
than those two the symptoms of which I have
enumerated; I shall not give any description of their
symptoms, but will only observe it is my opin-
ion from the success attending the use of this ex-
tract in the Psoriasis diffusa, and Psoriasis pal-
maria, that it would be one of the best saturat-
ing applications to the parts affected with these
intermittent forms of disease; they being in my
opinion different modifications, or grades of
the same disease affecting different parts and
in some cases being more violent. In such
mild cases internal Remedies, particularly
mild cathartics should be used with the
external Remedies recommended in the Psoriasis
diffusa.

I have now, gentlemen concluded my Inaugural
dissertation I am fully sensible of its many imperfec-
tions; for which my only apology is the short time
I have been allowed to compose it. To conclude without
turning my most cordial thanks to the professors of
medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, for the
kindness and attention shown me, and the many
opportunities

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Opportunities of acquiring ~~useful~~ knowledge, which
they have severally afforded, would argue the greatest
ingratitude.

That happiness and prosperity may attend you
all, gentlemen, is my most sincere wish.

ledge which
the ground
attend you
wish.

r. Rye.

2 week

Monday - 1st.

Safford MM.

Leitch un.